

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1421

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
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SUBJ: VISITS TO FIVE COLLEGES IN THE NORTHEAST

REF: PEKING 1379

SUMMARY. DURING A RECENT TRIP TO THE NORTHEAST, USLO OFFICER VISITED FIVE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES. SCHOOL OFFICIALS AT ALL UNIVERSITIES SAID THEY HAD EITHER ABOLISHED OR WOULD SOON ABOLISH THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE SYSTEM IN THEIR SCHOOLS AND COLLEGE PRESIDENTS WOULD BE APPOINTED. UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS DESCRIBE THE FIRST GROUP OF STUDENTS ADMITTED IN FEBRUARY UNDER THE NEW EXAMINATIONS AS "EXCELLENT" AND IN SOME CASES, THEY SAID, STUDENTS WERE MORE QUALIFIED THAN THE PROFESSORS. ALL FIVE SCHOOLS HAVE NOW RETURNED TO THE FOUR YEAR SYSTEM, HAVE PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING THREE YEAR GRADUATE PROGRAMS, AND KIRIN UNIVERSITY WILL BEGIN ACCEPTING FOREIGN STUDENTS IN 1980. END SUMMARY.

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1. DURING A MAY 4-12 VISIT TO DALIEN, SHENYANG, HARBIN AND CHANGCHUN (REFTEL), USLO OFFICER VISITED FIVE COLLEGES: THE DALIEN INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING, LIAONING UNIVERSITY, THE NORTH CHINA FORESTRY INSTITUTE (HARBIN), HEILUNGKIANG UNIVERSITY AND KIRIN UNIVERSITY. OFFICIALS AT ALL SCHOOLS PROUDLY REMARKED THAT UNIVERSITY EDUCATION WAS NOW A TOP

PRIORITY AFTER A 12 YEAR LAPSE. SCIENCE, TECHNICAL TRAINING, AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES ARE BEING EMPHASIZED.

2. OFFICIALS AT THE NORTH CHINA FORESTRY INSTITUTE IN HARBIN SAID THAT THE SCHOOL'S REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE HAD CEASED TO FUNCTION IN 1973 AND AN INSTITUTE DIRECTOR HAD BEEN APPOINTED IN ITS PLACE LAST YEAR. RESPONDING TO CHAIRMAN HUA'S PROPOSAL AT THE FIFTH NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS, KIRIN UNIVERSITY ABOLISHED ITS REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE IN MARCH AND OTHER SCHOOLS HAVE PLANS TO ABOLISH THEIR RC'S "VERY SOON". AN OFFICIAL AT LIAONING UNIVERSITY HINTED THAT A GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENT ABOLISHING THE REVOLUTINARY COMMITTEE SYSTEM IN UNIVERSITIES MIGHT BE MADE IN JUNE. ONLY HEILUNGKIANG UNIVERSITY, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES, STILL HAS A FUNCTIONING RC.

3. PROFESSORS AT ALL FIVE SCHOOLS DESCRIBED THE NEW GROUP OF STUDENTS ADMITTED IN FEBRUARY UNDER THE NEW NATION-WIDE EXAMINATION SYSTEMS AS "EXCELLENT". MORE THAN ONE OFFICIAL REMARKED, STUDENTS "EVEN SURPASS THE PROFESSORS IN KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITY". USLO OFFICER VISITED ONE THIRD YEAR ENGLISH CLASS AT LIAONING UNIVERSITY AND 12 THIRD AND SECOND YEAR ENGLISH CLASSES AT HEILUNGKIANG UNIVERSITY AND FOUND THAT A BROAD RANGE OF STUDENTS AT THIS LEVEL HAD A CONFIDENTIAL

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GOOD COMMAND OF ENGLISH -- HIGHER THAN AN EQUIVALENT FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASS IN THE UNITED STATES. WITH THE NEW CLASS, ALL SCHOOLS HAVE NOW ESTABLISHED A FOUR YEAR COLLEGE COURSE. STUDENTS ADMITTED UNDER THE OLD SYSTEM, HOWEVER, WILL STILL GRADUATE AFTER ONLY THREE YEARS OF STUDY.

4. ALL SCHOOLS HAVE PLANS TO ESTABLISH THREE YEAR GRADUATE PROGRAM BEGINNING NEXT YEAR. DALIEN INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING ALREADY HAS ELEVEN GRADUATE STUDENTS AND PLANS TO BRING THE TOTAL UP TO 120 NEXT YEAR. IN ADDITION, THE SCHOOLS PLAN TO INCREASE STUDENT ENROLLMENT, IN SOME CASES MORE THAN DOUBLING THE STUDENT POPULATION. KIRIN UNIVERSITY OFFICIALS STATED THAT FOREIGN STUDENTS WILL BE ADMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY IN 1980. LIAONING UNIVERSITY ALREADY HAS 25 FOREIGN STUDENTS.

5. COMMENT: ALL SCHOOLS DISPLAY NEW ACADEMIC MOMENTUM, AND ARE PLANNING NEW PROGRAMS AND ORDERING THE LATEST FOREIGN TEXTBOOKS. PROFESSORS AND OFFICIALS REMARKED THAT DISCIPLINE HAS RETURNED TO THE CLASSROOM AND NEW STUDENTS ARE MORE COMMITTED TO ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

THAN ANY ENTERING CLASS SINCE 1949. NEVERTHELESS, AS
ONE CHINESE OFFICIAL REMARKED, THERE ARE ONE HUNDRED
YOUNG PEOPLE VYING FOR EACH UNIVERSITY LEVEL OPENING.
DISAPPOINTMENT, FRUSTRATION AND SOCIAL AND POLITICAL
TENSION ARE FOUND TO DEVELOP AMONG THOSE WHO DO NOT
MAKE THE GRADE. EDUCATION POLICY HAS BEEN A
PERENIALLY EXPLOSIVE ISSUE WHICH CONTRIBUTED TO THE START
OF THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION AND TOUCHED OFF THE MOVEMENT
TO PURGE TENG HSIAO-PING IN 1975. UNIVERSITY
OFFICIALS ADMITTED THE NEW ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS WERE PARTICULARLY
RESTRICTIVE AND INDEED THEY SMACK OF ELITISM. THE ROAD AHEAD WILL
NOT BE EASY AND THE THWARTED ASPIRATIONS OF THE YOUNG WILL PRO-
BABLY CONTINUE TO BE A POTENTIALLY DISRUPTIVE POLITICAL FORCE.
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